

Study Finds that Expanding Medicaid in NC Would Lead to Nearly \$22 Billion in Increased Business Activity, 43,000 More Jobs

First-of-its-kind, county-by-county study shows nearly 500,000 could gain insurance if Medicaid program expanded in 2016, lowering NC's higher-than-national uninsured rate

A new report shows that by 2020 the North Carolina workforce could grow by more than 43,000 jobs, and the state's economy could gain tens of billions in business revenue if the state expands Medicaid eligibility requirements. The report - authored by researchers at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and funded by Cone Health Foundation and the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust - includes data for all 100 North Carolina counties, and concludes that nearly 500,000 currently uninsured residents could gain coverage if the state closes the Medicaid coverage gap.

The estimates for Anson County are: 1) Number of newly insured by 2017 - 1,260; 2) Number of jobs created by 2020 - 49; 3) Increase in county business activity 2016 to 2020 (in 2014 dollars) - \$21,300,000.

Researchers estimate that as many as 300,000 people who are currently uninsured would gain Medicaid coverage in 2016 if the program is expanded that year, with another 178,000 likely to enroll in 2017.

"We have some of the most restrictive Medicaid eligibility requirements in the country, so hundreds of thousands of low-income North Carolinians will benefit if the program expands," said Susan Shumaker, president, Cone Health Foundation. "The decision not to expand the program impacts all of us, not just those who are struggling to access the care they need to stay healthy. It has already also cost jobs and billions of dollars, and will continue to do so."

The report estimates that if the state expands Medicaid by 2016, 43,314 jobs will be added to North Carolina's workforce. Specifically, the health care sector could gain more than 23,000 jobs - those needed to provide care to the newly insured. The construction, retail, professional and food service sectors would also see a boost in employment.

"The potential ripple effect goes far beyond the walls of hospitals, the physician offices and clinics," said Leighann Ku, PhD, MPH, lead author of the report at the Center for Health Policy Research, which is based at Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University. "The data highlight that local economies are losing out on millions of dollars in revenue - money that could be spent on education, infrastructure and other needs - and the lost federal dollars in Medicaid funding are even more substantial."

Data show North Carolina's uninsured rate of 18.1 percent is higher than the national average; so is the state's unemployment rate. If the state does not change course and expand Medicaid eligibility, Ku and his coauthors find that between 2016 and 2020, North Carolina will turn down more than \$21 billion in federal funds to cover the newly insured by Medicaid. In exchange, the state would have to contribute \$1.7 billion. In addition, after accounting for higher tax revenue due to economic growth and potential savings in other health care services, the state budget could save more than \$300 million from 2016 to 2020.

Furthermore, the report authors find that the state will miss out on \$862 million in tax revenue and \$13.7 billion in gross product, or goods and services produced in the state. Finally, the report notes that the benefits associated with Medicaid expansion and the predicted losses without it are universal across North Carolina's 100 counties.

"Medicaid expansion in North Carolina does not pit cities against suburbs or the countryside. This issue stretches to every corner of the state," said Karen McNeil-Miller, president, Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust. "Expanding the program means not only expanding coverage to residents in every county, but it also means expanding the opportunity for good-paying jobs that improve the lives of our neighbors and boost local economies statewide - from Murphy to Manteo."

To access the full report and one-page overview of all 100 North Carolina counties, visit www.NCMedicaidExpansion.com.

About Cone Health Foundation Cone Health Foundation's mission is to measurably improve the health of the people in the greater Greensboro area. Founded in 1997, the Foundation is a support organization to Cone Health and is Greensboro's only health-specific philanthropic organization. Since its inception, Cone Health Foundation has awarded more than \$71 million to community nonprofit partners. The majority of these grants fall into the Foundation's four focus areas: Access to Health Care, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse and Mental Health.

About The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust was established in 1947 and is now one of the largest private trusts in North Carolina. Its mission is to improve the quality of life and quality of health for the financially needy of North Carolina. The Health Care Division promotes wellness statewide by investing in prevention and treatment. The Poor and Needy Division responds to basic life needs and invests in treatments that improve the quality of life and health for financially needy residents of Forsyth County. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. serves as sole trustee.

About Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University Established in July 1997 as the School of Public Health and Health Services, Milken Institute School of Public Health is the only school of public health in the nation's capital. Today, nearly 1,534 students from almost every U.S. state and more than 45 countries pursue undergraduate, graduate and doctoral-level degrees in public health. The school also offers an online Master of Public Health, and an online Executive Master of Health Administration, which allow students to pursue their degree from anywhere in the world.

Do You Need a Coat or Blanket? Would You Like to Donate?

The Faith-Based Center of Hope has begun their "Warm Coats, Warm Hearts" program. They have distributed coats to several of the churches and schools in Anson County.

Blankets for the elderly are also available.

To donate coats and blankets or to request help, please contact Vancine Sturdivant at 704-848-4412.

Free Ultrasounds & Pregnancy Tests

Hope Pregnancy Resource Center offers free ultrasounds and pregnancy tests every other Monday.

They bring a mobile ultrasound unit to the Wal-Mart parking lot from 2 to 5 p.m. for the tests.

They also offer prenatal / parenting classes every Tuesday at 3:30 p.m. at Cathedral Baptist Church.

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For more information about Hope Pregnancy Resource Center call 704-690-6689 or visit hprc-anson.org.

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